

Informant: LMP-S13

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CH: If you want to start to talking to me about the...(inaudible)...herb.

S13: The...(inaudible)...herb, is an herb that you boil, with...(inaudible)...after the blossom of the (*sarapio?*) and the (*chimas?*) erupts. With sage (*salvia*) you can rid the skin of the marks that various illnesses leave. It's curative, it's an water that when boiled with it's herbs as ingredients it will take off the colorization that the scars/marks that the illness has left on the skin. The (*Don Carlo*) Herb, the boiled root expulses...(inaudible)...You take it a lot of it. It's like...(inaudible)...this one here, (*Yerba de Don Carlos*) removes curses, coconut water (*agua de coco*), (*salvejera?*), sugar (*azucar*), a cup of that in the morning and one at night cures Gonorrhea. It's important because from the inside out and it reduces inflammation and eruptions that the person might get due to sexual relations...(inaudible)...or very well analyzed.

CH: How long would you have to drink this?

S13: for about, well depending on whether it's a ...(inaudible)...type of gonorrhea, you take it for 2 weeks straight, three times a day. After this it is recommended that they see a doctor for medication which are more aggressive, because the gonorrhea might be more aggressive and strong...(inaudible)...and the person have problems with their sexual organs...(inaudible)...preventative...(inaudible)...of the sickness.

CH: So when the sickness begins, and if one begins to take this remedy you have just explained to me, it could take away or help prevent gonorrhea?

S13: It's a preventative thing until the doctors see you, and even still taking the remedy take medication because this works in expulsing from the inside out. So you take it out and you get rid of the sickness.

CH: And when one prepares the (*Yerba de Don Carlos*) to get the gallstones from the kidney, how do you prepare that?

S13: ...(inaudible)...like water, you have to boil it and then you drink it like regular drinking water.

CH: so you boil it?

S13: Yes, in measurements of 1 or 2 liters, and then you drink this water normally in order to remove the gallstones in the kidneys, so that it dissolves them.

CH: How much of the (*Don Carlos*) do you use for one of those?

S13: It depends on the person and on how much they might want to prepare for the day or various days, 3 ounces, 2 ounces, depending on how much herb you have, you can make the tea. If you don't have it fresh, you can get it in pharmacies where they sell natural herbs.

CH: And the banana peel (*cascara de guineo*) could you tell me how much of that and how much of sage (*salvia*) do you use and do you boil them together?

S13: Together, all together, because they have to get one, just one, tea. So you can take 1 ounce or 2 ounces or you can take up to a 1 and ½ ounce depending on the treatment.

CH: And how many times a day would they have to clean their skin?

S13: Three times a day

CH: For how many weeks or months?

S13: I would recommend for 3 to 4 weeks, because the marks/blemishes take some time to get rid of and so this is something that makes the skin better and it returns your original color skin.

CH: So you take the tea and at the same time...

S13: and at the same time you can clean your skin with that. We have an herb...a plant that is called the (*Yagroma?*). It has a characteristic of having two colors, one color which is whiter on one side and a darker more gray color on the other, it's a plant that has two types of colors. It helps us with the flu (*catarro*), the...(inaudible)...the leaf of (*Yagruma?*) you can boil it with brown sugar, honey (*miel de castilla*), violet leaves (*ojas de violeta*), it's for asthma crisis and for flu (*catarro*). You boil this and you can take it three times a day, depending on how the person feels and ...(inaudible)...also we have another recipe with the ...(inaudible)...This recipe for flu (*catarro*) or for when the chest feels real tight or we have lots of phlegm that does not want to come out and the (*Yagruma?*) we but together with the (*Bejucovin?*), (*Guavin?*), (*Zapaton?*), fig leaves (*ojas de higo*), (*Cordoban?*), holy sugarcane (*Caña Santa*) or (*te de limon*), as it is known in other parts, orange leaves (*ojas de naranja*), (*ojas de Sandoval*) to all this you can add a bit of brown sugar, some (*romerillo*) rosemary and all this helps us expulse the phlegm due to flu.

CH: so this is boiled?

S13: yes, all goes boiled in an equation of about two cups so that it can be a strong remedy. So that they can get rid of the phlegm that come from flu (*catarro*).

CH: so that's why you put on the sugar so that it can...

S13: Exactly, so that it's thicker and the very herb makes it thicker so you reduce it to two cups and it becomes like a thick remedy and you drink it by the spoonfuls. 2 spoonfuls in the morning, 2 at night

CH: Do it until it boils?

S13: It has to boil, the plants must boil and release all it's...(inaudible)...so we can make from two cups the necessary remedy...

CH: So you take it in spoonfuls?

S13: yes, Two in the morning, 2 in the afternoon and 2 at night. Never a maximum of 6 spoonfuls

CH: For how long?

S13: You have to take them for a while, as with any remedy, once the person feels a bit better and with not so much phlegm and everything is easier, well then the person begins to reduce the dose.

CH: So it depends on the person?

S13: Yes, because there are some that a cold lasts for a long time and then others where it goes away quick. It depends because they might get colics...(inaudible)...or because one person smokes or they don't take care of themselves so the sickness can become worse. This is preventative medicine, it's good enough to get you to the doctor where there are stronger medication that combats the chronic ness that might exist in the person. We have another plant called (*tabado*), this plant is really good for rheumatism, kidneys, chronic bronchitis, inflammation, you can drink the herb and you cant take baths with it to remove blemishes/marks on the skin and you can put hot towels of it on the face. You can boil this and with a very fine cloth you put like poultice (*fomentos*) and the skin begins to darken or lighten depending on what type of skin the person has. It begins to remove the blemishes with some friction. It's good for rheumatism, so then you take the leaves and you put them...(inaudible)...with alcohol, you put also, liquor with some camphor (*alcanfor*) and with various other herbs and so you leave it to heal, like a...(inaudible)...and then at a week or 15 days that it is closed up, you take it out and...(inaudible)...and float on a...(inaudible)...fever, arthritic pain, and that heat penetrates and gives very good results. It gives lots of relief for rheumatism and taking it in tea, commonly will help with the kidneys, it cleans them. It's really good.

CH: And these plants, like the 'banana herb' (*yerba de guineo*), (*yerba de don carlos*), (inaudible), are they found here in this area? In Los Angeles?

S13: Possibly somewhere in LA, some others we can find in Puerto Rico, Miami or with exporter of herbs, because in some places they know it by this name and in others they know it by a different name but the plant is the same. And many people go looking for it by another name and when they see it, they say this is it but they know it by something else. In some places we use it for something and in others for whatever else they might know.

CH: So when one would...(inaudible)...and is drinking the *tabano* tea (*te de tabano*)

S13: You make it into drinking water, you can drink it as much as you want, you drink it like regular water.

CH: for rheumatism, how many times a day would you say?

S13: it's recommended that it be done at night when the person is getting ready to rest, so that they can cover there legs with a cover or something so that the heat from the alcohol function properly and get rid of the cold in the bones.

CH: Speaking of alcohol, could you explain to me that you put...(inaudible)...with alcohol. How much alcohol, how much water?

S13: Well its not so much done by measurement because it could be half alcohol and half liquor, so in one bottle we will place the (*tabano*) leaves, we are going to put all the ingredients and at the end we add the liquor that we need, 90 proof liquor, 40 proof, 30 proof, or (*agua ardiente*) (note: a very strong alcoholic spirit) and any type of really strong alcoholic beverage and we cover that bottle in order to give them a cure for a week, 15 days, depending how much time we have to process it and that...(inaudible)...

CH: in 15 days?

S13: 15 days is enough. There some that make various bottles and they let them be for a month or two, depending. They'll bury it in the ground, they cover it so that it can preserve.

CH: So...

S13: More time is better.

CH: but in 15 days...

S13: You can use it because the alcohol has already absorbed the plant processes and you can you use it.

CH: And when you prepare it, how big should the bottle be?

S13: The bottle is optional, whatever size you want it to be. The size does not matter. It can be any type of bottle, plastic or glass, just so the liquid does not spill. Nothing made of tin, it should be crystal/glass.

CH: Tin is...

S13: it could spoil or oxidize, it could dry up, or it could spill out and so then it does not come out right, so its better with glass or plastic.

CH: And is it important the amount of plant?

S13: No, No, it does not have to measured, it can be as much as you want. The more you add the better, the more consistency it has. We have sassafras (*sasafras*) which is used in food but it's also...you can use the rind and the (*sansabarillo? de monte*) [??] with the

root of the (*jigan?*) [??] tree, cleans the blood. It is a cure for the blood, there are many people that suffer from anemia, people have loose blood or because of some process their blood is not right or they have something with their blood. And this rind with the...(inaudible)...and the root of the (*jiga?*) tree, made really strong, is given to someone to drink so that the blood go back to it's level of consistency. This does not have measurements, you can drink a small cup in the morning and a half-cup at night, depending on the aggressivity of the blood.

CH: And this is something you drink for a long time?

S13: Yes, like a preventative medicine. But like I always say, go to the doctor. Visit the doctor, because these are preventative medicine that were done long ago when there was not conventional medicine. The medicine that we know now was not around, well they had to take it for long periods of time because there was no other alternative. But now we can take an alternative medicine and go to the doctor and we can get better faster, than in days. We also have 'Castilian sage' (*salvia de castilla*) in tea for insomnia and for nerves, it's like the (*paciflora*), the name is interchangeable. It controls (*salto de estomago*) "stomach jump" or when you are nervous or something. These herbs you can mix with rose petals (*petalos de rosa*) and it helps with the jump of the stomach (*salto del estomago*) and it controls ...(inaudible)...

CH: What is the jump of the stomach (*salto del estomago*)?

S13: That is when the person feels as if in the depths of their stomach they have strong pulsation, they feel as if they have a high anxiety and then that is what controls the nerves and the ...(inaudible)...system, they manifest themselves in the entire organism, so it's something that (*salvia de castilla*) helps out a lot in.

CH: And how many times in a day would a person have to drink this?

S13: No, this tea is preferably drunk at night, not in the day, so that you can rest and the person can work...(inaudible)...comfortable.

CH: So it helps you to sleep?

S13: Yes, also there is what is called the (*salvavera?*). This is a big tree with wide leaves and a seed. The seed of this plant you can make a purgative, it's very strong, with three leaves, you mush them up and you put them to boil and you make a half a cup, that is a very strong purgative, you have to be careful in not giving too much of this because it's very strong. But if you...(inaudible)...with almond oil (*aceite de almendra*), the purgative is even stronger. On it's own it's strong but if you add almond oil it's stronger, so many plants are good to cure but also are very aggressive because you have to have a measurement so that you can administer them and to know the person's history, to know if the person has high blood pressure, if they suffer from heart problems, you have to know because there are some bodies that are more tolerant than others and some can assimilate more than others. You have to be aware of this to give a tea, you have to know if they are allergic to some medication or herb, because it's very important to know. The boiled leaves, just the boiled leaves, with nothing added ...(inaudible)...

CH: The boiled leaf?

S13: Yes

CH: One leaf?

S13: Yes, with one, you take it warm it's very good, it will expunge everything in your stomach, with a person how is intoxicated or bad digestion and they cant vomit or something is down there, then this will help.

CH: So when someone has food poisoning.

S13: It helps because it expulses everything. It's like drinking a glass hot water with a spoonful of salt, that is one hundred percent...(inaudible)...A glass of water with salt is ...(inaudible)... in three seconds, maybe less. Here we have another herb, that perhaps we don't find here but you find in other places it's called [??] (*rivaldo*?). The (*rivaldo*) is good for bile (*bilis*), when the person feels as if the acids, like they want to come up, like they want to vomit. It's also very good for liver problems and intestinal, it helps with inflammation of the pancreas and multiple gases. Normally you take two cups daily before you eat, so that when the person eats the acid has already been eliminated, it's an herb...(inaudible)...

CH: ...(inaudible)...

S13: Yes, ...(inaudible)...herbs...(inaudible)...it's the only one that uses it.

CH: How much of the herb do you use to make a cup?

S13: For one we can use 2 or 3 spoonfuls per cup, around 2 or 3 ounces depending on the quantity we want to take and in how sick the person is.

CH: So one spoonful...?

S13: Yes, an ounce or 2, depending on what we think. Next is rosemary (*romero*), it is very well known, it's famous. You make a tea of it and my grandma used to tell me that a rosemary (*romero*) tea and a prayer to San Ramon, would help women during childbirth. She would give them a tea and read to them the San Ramon prayer and that the person would give birth without difficulty. Also it's good for...(inaudible)...mixed with alcohol, you put in a bottle several pieces of rosemary (*romero*) and you let stay for some days and that you use a bath, you put it on your forehead for headaches, you put it there in on your neck and in all parts that ache

CH: For example, myself, I dance a lot, if I have some pain...

S13: Put rosemary (*romero*) in a bottle of alcohol and then rub it on, it's like a massage, do it with a thin cloth over the affected area.

CH: And after that is it recommended that the person cover themselves? For example when you use the (*tavano*) for rheumatism, you use it at night which is best at night...?

S13: It's best because then the body receives the heat and from the herb and the person will be in less pain. The juice of the rosemary (*romero*) thickens the hair, its very famous people will boil rosemary (*romero*) and they wash their hair, in a tea it helps with a cough and alleviates bronchitis that is usually caused by strong colds. It removes what is usually coldness of the chest (*frialdad del pecho*), when we have lots of pain in the chest

CH: what do you mean by juice (*sumo*)?

S13: That is when you squeeze out the liquid inside the plant, that is it. That is the extract of the plant

CH: And to prepare that liquid how would you do it?

S13: Well we can mush it up until we extract all the juice from the plant.

CH: Without using water?

S13: Right, it's a bit strong....

CH: So you have to work at it?

S13: Yes, we also have the [???] (*rosa francesa*), in a tea it fortifies brain and bones, you make it in tea and a tonic, which is good for the cold, these are plants you have to process them a little more than usual, you have to culture it, you have to wash it well and dry it and squeeze it and then get what you need from it. When we have finished cultivating it we can put it in some warm water, very little water and we can get a lot out of it and it will be really concentrated. Not with cold water though, because hot water will dilute more, relaxes more, and opens up the plant a lot more. We have the [???] (*resesedad?*) which is a plant that cockroaches...(inaudible)...They don't like it. It's good for 'intestinal flu' (*resfriado intestinal*), it's like rosemary (*romero*) where it thickens hair, it's also good to shower with, to use on the scalp and baths, for calm...rosemary (*romero*) and (*rosa francesa*) is also good for this. The plant is as good to drink as it is to shower with.

CH: When you prepare the plant to shower with, how much of the plant and how much water do you use? And how do you prepare it?

S13: Well we can take a certain quantity...you know quantity...(inaudible)...depending on the quantity we have we can divide it into pieces. I particularly don't like, when making a bath to relax, to boil the plant, I like to cultivate it in natural water and let it mature, not putting on it hot water, just leave it in the fresh water, depending of course on the temperature and healthiness of the person, maybe the person needs a bit more of warm water or cold water, it depends on personal preference. We also have the (*mastuerso?*) This plant belongs to one of the Orishas which is San Lazaro, it's good to combat the cold. You boil the root and you take it three times a day, it's refreshing and it

lowers the sugar level in blood. It's real good, you can drink this like regular drinking water, because it really helps to lower sugar levels in the blood.

CH: And how much of the plant do you use?

S13: Whatever you have, whether it's fresh, dried or whatever.

CH: 3 times a day?

S13: Yes, it's very refreshing. There is another plant called 'mugwort' (*artemisa*) it's very well known. A lot of it comes from Miami, you can get it in some places already dry and prepared, in bags. It is used for parts of the body that are hurting and the root of the branches to combat fever, to the root you can add camphor (*alcamfor*), alcohol, (*incensio de nata*) or rosemary (*romero*), we can also add some (*canelia de costo?*), (*carquesa?*), sage (*salvia*), and this helps with...(inaudible)...also with infection. Like we said before you can put all these in bottles, you can boil them or fresh with all this stuff so that the herb can begin to absorb and so when you rub it all this heat penetrates to the bone and all throughout the body and it can give you more flexibility and less pain.

CH: How many times a day?

S13: I recommend that when the person finishes working and is going to rest, because if you rub it and continue working, well you'll continue to suffer the pain, you won't get relief. It's good for when the person is already resting, when their workday is over and you can take a bath and be relaxed when you sleep.

CH: Just like rosemary (*romero*) and (*tavano?*)

S13: Exactly, they have the same functions. We also have another plant (*carbo santo?*), it's a plant that has a liquid, when you cut it, it's liquid is white like milk. This liquid can cure cuts, cuts on the mouth and it also cures where the cuts are in moist places, like where there is sweat, like beneath the armpit. This plant helps it heal and helps so that it stops the bleeding. This liquid you can put in places where you feel pain and it begins to heal. Also in a tea is good for colic and ...(inaudible)...for fever, so the seed, you make a tea with the seed, it combats colics and fevers...

CH: For kids or grown ups?

S13: for kids too, but in smaller doses, you give them two small spoonfuls a day. And the grown up can take a half cup

CH: And how many seeds?

S13: Well, 10 or 8 depending how much tea you want and the person making the tea has to also have a certain knowledge of what, how much they are going to do the tea for.

CH: So again it depends on the person?

S13: Yes and their knowledge and necessity of they may have and the gravity of the illness the person has. The (*Cordoba?*) we have here, the leaves go in tea for colds, it helps with asthma and (*hemopixis?*).

CH: What's that?

S13: (*hemopixis?*) is something that is produced due to asthma in the chest. There is a noise in your chest like a growl when you breathe. Well it helps get rid of this and it's excellent, the (*Cordoba?*), for when the person has gone through one of the great ailments of the past like, (*tosferina*) and the cough from measles (*tos del sarampion*) or anything that the sickness itself brought with it like coughs, chest pains, it helps. The (*Cordoba?*) root you make into a tonic and you can use it for any sickness having to do with the respiratory tracts and any infection there in.

CH: The leaf is used for (*tosferina?*) and measles (*sarampion*)?

S13: Yes, you have to have lots of roots so that you can process them and extract a tonic from them, to be able to boil it and strain it and you get a strong tonic. It's good and helps a lot.

CH: Is there some measurement for the roots? For example...

S13: No, you have to have a lot in order to make a tonic, you have to lots of them in order to make a good batch of it. You have to have a good batch of it in order to make it, you are never going to get a tonic out of just one plant or a small root, you have to use a lot, many of them in order to make a tonic, tea or for an ointment.

CH: I wanted to ask you if you could give me an example of some of the symptoms of the (*tosferina?*) since I seem to hear about a lot.

S13: Well I don't have great knowledge about that. But usually they say that it's a strong ailment and it's contagious, the person feels a lot of pain in the body, the person coughs a lot, the person feels without strength, they feel weak, it's a bad sickness and the person is out of it...all these (*tosferina*), measles (*sarampion*), mumps (*paperas*) are all bad. The (*paperas*) is bad because it can travel and affect other parts of the body, it's contagious.

CH: With women too?

S13: yes, usually their genital organs, they suffer alterations due to it. These are ailments that are already eliminated but many people still know of it because they have seen it or...

CH: And my last question about the plants is about...(inaudible)...(*sereno?*)

S13: Exactly, that's for when the person has a few problems with memory, not when they have a severe problem where they are a cadaver. It helps stabilize and control the nervous system.

CH: Have you heard of...well they say that celery (*apio*) is good for memory and for the brain and for students who have to be alert and studying there is this and I forget what else.

S13: Celery (*apio*) has great recognition, because you can put on it celery, carrot (*zanaoria*), apple (*manzana*), you can make purees. Aside from being a food and energy source it also keeps you alert, it's real good.

CH: and so does the (*rosa francesca*) work in that same way?

S13: in the moment that a person is feeling without energy or is going through some situation, nervous, because it's a stimulant that helps you re-animate yourself.

CH: MY last thing I wanted was about the tree that you showed me last time, it was the (Sain?) tree. When I got home and thought about what we had talked about, I don't know if I understood it too well. That tree is attributed to (*Sain?*) or is it one that belongs to (*Sain?*)

S13: IT has a configuration that is associated with (*Osaine?*) due to the way that (*Osaine?*) is and the way the tree is. We know the story of (*Osaine?*) and we know how he looked physically and the tree is attributed to him because the tree has some of his characteristics, that's why you attribute the tree to him.

CH: That's good, this is far enough...

TAPE ENDS